



## **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT May 2003**

This report contains an Executive Summary and a detailed analysis of the Youth Questionnaire results, including key observations. There are three appendices. Appendix A is a copy of the questionnaire. Appendix B consists of detailed data tables, and Appendix C is a summary of open-ended responses to the questionnaire.

### **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **A. Introduction**

The Youth Questionnaire is part of an extensive public involvement program that provides an opportunity for local residents to participate in developing the City of Eugene's Park, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan. The questionnaire focused on how youth use existing parks and programs and solicited their ideas for improvements. The results from the Youth Questionnaire will be included in the Community Needs Assessment, an integral part of the comprehensive plan.

#### **B. Questionnaire Sample**

A total of 647 questionnaires were completed by students from 10 local High Schools and Middle Schools, including the following: South Eugene High School, Sheldon High School, North Eugene High School, Churchill High School, Cal Young Middle School, Meadowview Middle School, Roosevelt Middle School, Jefferson Middle School, Kennedy Middle School, and Spencer Butte Middle School.

This report describes the questionnaire findings. For each question, N equals the total number of responses to the question. Because the questionnaire was not administered to a random sample of youth, the data from the questionnaire cannot be used to make generalizations about the entire youth population. The data are unique to the respondents who completed the questionnaire.

#### **C. Key Findings**

The following key findings emerged from the questionnaire:

- The parks and community facilities that had the highest frequency of use by youth respondents were (in order of frequency) **neighborhood parks, swimming pools, community parks, metropolitan parks, and multi-purpose trails.**
- **Not enough time** (31.4%), **inconvenient locations (too far away)** (15.0%), and **a lack of adequate things to do** (14.2%) were cited as the most significant reasons for not using parks and facilities.
- Nearly one-fourth of respondents (23.2%) felt that **improving existing parks** would best meet their recreation needs. **Developing more neighborhood parks** (16.6%), **developing more multi-use community parks** (15.7%), and **improving habitat in natural areas** (15.8%) also were selected frequently.



- The three types of recreation facilities most needed by youth in Eugene are **river access** (16.3%), **commercial entertainment** (14.8%), and **skateparks** (13.4%).
- The highest percent of questionnaire respondents indicated that **swimming pools** (24.2%) were the most needed type of sport facility. A **sports complex** (14.8%) and **outdoor basketball courts** (14.7%) also were noted frequently.
- Over one-third of respondents (37.2%) **participated in a City-sponsored recreation program or special event**, while 31.2% did not, and 31.6% did not know.
- **Competitive and recreational sports** (20.3%) and **special events** (20.1%), such as dances, concerts in the park, and festivals, are the most needed recreational activities by youth in Eugene.
- Nearly one-third (31.8%) of respondents indicated that they would be most comfortable attending recreation activities at **school**, followed by **community centers** (23.7%) and **teen centers** (20.3%).
- The top five activities in which youth participate are (in order) **watching TV/videos, computers, reading, playing a musical instrument, and basketball**.
- The top five activities that teens would like to do if facilities were available are (in order) **basketball, bicycling, watching TV, computers, and camping**.
- Nine of the top 20 preferred activities have a significant latent demand—a difference between what youth are currently doing and what they would like to be doing. This difference may be attributed to a lack of facilities or recreational opportunities in **camping, concerts, rock climbing, festivals, dancing, river rafting, hiking/backpacking, fishing, and canoeing/kayaking**.

## II. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

This section provides question-by-question analysis of the Youth Questionnaire. The appendices provide supplemental information.

### 1. Approximately how often in the last 12 months have you used the following parks and community facilities? (See the City of Eugene Park and Open Space Resources list.)

Facility	Average Youth Visits Annually
Neighborhood Parks in your area	6.03
Swimming Pool	5.91
Community Park	4.47
Metropolitan Park	4.06
Multi-Purpose Trails	4.05
Concert Venue	3.84
Natural Areas	3.58
Community Center	2.93



#### *Key Observations*

- Neighborhood parks receive the highest amount of use with an average of 6.03 visits per youth. Swimming pools followed with 5.91 visits per youth.

### **2. If you use all of the parks and facilities above less than five times a year, tell us why you don't use them. (Please check your top two choices.)**

- 31.4% Not enough time
  - 16.4% Other
  - 15.0% Too far away, not conveniently located
  - 14.2% Lack adequate things to do
  - 10.4% Not aware of parks and facilities
  - 6.6% Poorly maintained
  - 3.8% Too crowded
  - 2.2% Feel unsafe
- N = 316

#### *Key Observations*

- Nearly one third (31.4%) of the respondents suggested that they simply did not have enough time to use parks and facilities five or more times a year.
- An inconvenient location (too far away) (15.0%) and a lack of adequate things to do (14.2%) were cited as the second and third most significant reasons for not using parks and facilities.
- Youth ages 15-17 were more likely to cite a lack of adequate things to do (21.4%) than youth ages 10-14 (11.3%), suggesting that there are more perceived recreational opportunities for the younger age group.
- Only 2.2% of youth indicated that they felt unsafe in parks and facilities.

### **3a. How can parks and natural areas in Eugene be improved to meet your needs? (Please check your top two choices.)**

- 23.2% Improve existing parks
  - 16.6% Develop more small, close-to-home neighborhood parks
  - 15.8% Improve habitat in existing natural areas
  - 15.7% Develop more large, multi-use community parks, such as Amazon Park
  - 8.5% Acquire land to build new active parks
  - 8.1% Develop more large parks that serve the entire region, such as Alton Baker Park
  - 7.0% Acquire land for more natural area parks
  - 5.2% No improvements are needed
- N = 573



#### *Key Observations*

- Nearly one-fourth of respondents (23.2%) felt that improving existing parks would best meet their recreational needs.
- Developing more neighborhood parks (16.6%), developing more multi-use community parks (15.7%), and improving habitat in natural areas (15.8%) were also selected frequently.
- When asked to suggest other ideas for improving parks and natural areas in Eugene, youth most frequently listed in open-ended responses a need for more/better playground equipment, more facilities, more basketball courts, and more interesting “funner” stuff.

#### **4. Which of the following recreation facilities are most needed by youth in Eugene? (Please check your top two choices.)**

- 16.3% River access for recreation, swimming and boating
  - 14.8% Commercial entertainment facilities (e.g., movies, bowling alley)
  - 13.4% Skateparks
  - 11.0% Multi-purpose trails connecting community facilities for biking, walking, etc.
  - 10.5% Multi-use recreation center (gym, social areas, classrooms, etc.)
  - 10.1% Teen Center
  - 8.2% BMX Facility
  - 8.2% Areas for special events and festivals
  - 5.2% Other
  - 2.3% No new facilities are needed
- N = 585

#### *Key Observations*

- The three facilities most needed by youth in Eugene are river access (16.3%), commercial entertainment (14.8%), and skateparks (13.4%).

#### **5. Which of the following sport facilities are most needed by youth in Eugene? (Please check your top two choices.)**

- 24.2% Swimming pools
- 14.8% Sports Complex
- 14.7% Outdoor basketball courts
- 11.9% Turf fields (soccer, ultimate Lacrosse, etc.)
- 9.0% Gymnasiums



7.6% Others

6.6% Tennis courts

4.6% Frisbee or disc golf course

4.2% No new facilities are needed

2.0% Softball fields

N = 589

*Key Observations*

- The highest percent of questionnaire respondents indicated that swimming pools (24.2%) were the most needed type of sport facility. A sports complex (14.8%) and outdoor basketball courts (14.7%) were second and third choices.

**6. In the last year, have you participated in a recreation program or special event offered by the City of Eugene?**

37.2% Yes

31.6% Don't know

31.2% No

N = 602

*Key Observations*

- Only slightly more respondents (37.2%) participated in a recreation program or special event than not (31.2%).
- Nearly as many respondents (31.6%) didn't know if they had participated in a City-sponsored event or program.
- Youth ages 10-14 were more likely to have participated in a City-sponsored program (38.1% answered "yes" and 27.6% answered "no").
- Youth ages 15-17 were less likely to have participated in a City-sponsored program (35.4% answered "yes" and 37.4% answered "no").

**7. What types of recreation activities are most needed by youth in Eugene? (Please check your top two choices.)**

20.3% Sports (competitive or recreational)

20.1% Special events (dances, concerts in the park, festivals)

12.5% Outdoor/Environmental programs

9.9% Job-Related activities (volunteer, internship, or employment opportunities)

9.7% Aquatic programs



8.6% Special interest classes  
 7.9% Arts (performing, visual, cultural)  
 6.0% Drop-in activities  
 2.6% No new activities are needed  
 2.3% Others  
 N = 580

*Key Observations*

- Sports (20.3%), special events (20.1%), and outdoor/environmental programs (12.5%) are the three recreation activities most needed by youth in Eugene.

**8. Where should youth recreation activities be provided (i.e., where would you feel most comfortable going)? (Please check all that apply.)**

31.8% School  
 23.7% Community Center  
 20.3% Teen Center  
 13.1% Don't know  
 11.1% Others  
 N = 587

*Key Observations*

- Nearly one-third (31.8%) of respondents indicated that they would be most comfortable attending recreation activities at school.
- Community centers (23.7%) were listed slightly ahead of teen centers (20.3%) as second and third choices.
- In the open-ended responses, youth most frequently listed **parks** as places where activities should be provided.

**9. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your recreation needs?**

Data are summarized in Appendix C.

*Key Observations*

- In the open-ended responses, youth most frequently noted that more places to hang out/teen centers, more swimming pools with more "daring" facilities, and more youth-oriented concerts and events are needed in Eugene.



## 10. How old are you?

66.5% 10-14 years

33.5% 15-17 years

N = 597

## 11a. When the following activities are in season, how many times in a 30-day period do you participate on your own or in City programs? Please fill in the appropriate box. Please answer EACH item.

Recreation demand is difficult to quantify because of the many factors that influence recreation participation and interests. There have been many approaches tried for identifying this demand ranging from the use of national surveys and standards to measuring actual participant hours. Recognizing this problem, MIG began accumulating recreation participation information on communities throughout the Northwest. By making a comparison to other similar communities or with the NORTHWEST AVERAGE (the average of the last 15 communities surveyed) one can determine where specific activities are above or below the norm.

On the following page are youth participation rates for both indoor and outdoor activities. The per capita occasions for a 30-day period refers to the average number of times each youth participated in the activity when the activity was in season. These activities are ranked so that the most popular youth activities in Eugene appear first. The youth results are compared to the data from the City of Eugene's Community Survey and to the Northwest Average.



Rank	Activity	Youth Results	City of Eugene	Northwest Average
1	Watching TV/Video	14.45	3.92	3.92
2	Computers (personal)	10.94	3.70	6.47
3	Reading for Pleasure	8.13	3.52	7.83
4	Musical Instrument (playing)	7.38	1.64	1.61
5	Basketball	7.10	1.58	2.26
6	Exercising/Aerobics	6.31	2.96	3.41
7	Jogging/Running	6.27	2.06	2.49
8	Swimming (outdoor)	6.21	1.71	2.50
9	Bicycling for Pleasure	6.04	2.25	2.93
10	Family activities	5.04	2.48	3.60
11	Walking for Pleasure	4.83	3.22	5.37
12	Swimming (indoor)	4.79	1.60	2.20
13	Dog Walking	4.45	2.36	4.77
14	Soccer	4.18	1.46	1.72
15	Football	3.99	1.41	1.54
16	Playground (visit/play)	3.73	2.09	2.63
17	Concerts (attend)	3.32	1.88	1.94
18	Camping (general)	3.24	1.80	2.60
19	Wildlife Watching	3.17	2.08	2.16
20	Photography	3.12	1.68	1.56
21	Fairs and Festivals	3.11	1.91	2.21
22	Arts and Crafts	2.95	1.79	1.81
23	Skateboarding	2.90	1.10	0.83
24	Bicycling (commute)	2.79	1.77	0.99
25	Gourmet Cooking	2.74	1.73	1.68
26	Dancing (social)	2.73	1.35	1.02
27	Hiking/Backpacking	2.63	1.95	2.02
28	Tennis	2.56	1.21	1.09
29	Fishing (freshwater)	2.46	1.45	1.84
30	Baseball (youth)	2.35	1.31	1.49
31	Roller Skating / In-Line Skating	2.29	1.25	1.20
32	Bicycling (BMX)	2.09	1.12	0.90
33	Drama (participate)	2.05	1.16	0.66
34	Picnicking	2.01	1.77	2.02
35	Golf (play)	2.01	1.48	1.44
36	Gardening	1.97	2.37	3.99
37	Rock Climbing	1.91	1.14	0.66
38	Cultural Events (attend)	1.79	1.78	1.35
39	Volleyball (indoor)	1.78	1.14	0.92
40	Dancing (ballet, tap, etc.)	1.76	1.21	0.58
41	River Rafting	1.74	1.32	0.76
42	Ice Skating (indoor)	1.50	1.15	0.51
43	Softball	1.46	1.29	1.37
44	Volleyball (outdoor/sand)	1.45	1.18	0.88
45	Gymnastics	1.37	1.14	0.35
46	Disc Frisbee Golf	1.28	1.22	1.22
47	Canoe/Kayak	1.16	1.25	0.74
48	Skiing (cross country)	1.09	1.16	0.07
49	Ultimate Frisbee	1.00	1.12	1.12
50	Bird Watching/Feeding	.96	1.88	1.62





### *Key Observations*

- The top three activities for youth in Eugene are sedentary activities (watching TV/videos, computers, and reading).
- Basketball was the first organized sport activity to appear on the list at #5. Generally, for adults, organized sports appear in the 15-20 ranking range. In the City of Eugene's Community Survey, basketball appeared on the list at #27.
- The top ten activities for youth (age 10-14) were:

Watching TV/Video	15.52
Computers	11.06
Reading for Pleasure	8.41
Playing Musical Instrument	7.89
Basketball	7.81
Swimming (outdoors)	6.77
Jogging/Running	6.47
Bicycling for Pleasure	6.15
Exercise/Aerobics	6.08
Family Activities	5.42

- The top ten activities for youth (age 15-17) were:

Watching TV/Video	12.38
Computers	11.06
Reading for Pleasure	7.52
Exercise/Aerobics	6.99
Playing Musical Instrument	6.36
Basketball	5.92
Jogging/Running	5.88
Bicycling for Pleasure	5.77
Swimming (outdoors)	5.03
Walking for Pleasure	4.98

- Although youth ages 10-14 had a slightly higher participation rate in recreational activities, the top ten activities varied little between the two age groups. Only the tenth activity differed.
- Youth respondents (ages 10-17) in Eugene's Community Survey selected the same top 3 activities. However, they ranked family activities and playground visit/play as their 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> top choices respectively.



**11b. From the recreation activities listed below circle the ten (10) activities you would like to do more often if the facilities were available. Rank them in order of your preference.**

Respondents also were asked to rank their top ten preferred activities if facilities were available. The activity rankings were then scored with a weighted value by giving a first choice a value of ten, a second choice a value of nine, etc. The total weighted score was then calculated for each activity. The 20 highest-ranking activities are shown below. The weighted score is shown only for ranking purposes.

In the table below, the first column lists the activity the respondent would most like to do if facilities were available, in their ranked order. The last column lists the current participation ranking from Question 18. The difference between what residents are currently doing (column 4) and what they would like to be doing (column 1) is called the **latent demand**. The greater the two numbers vary from each other, the greater the latent demand. Activities with a latent demand value of 10 or greater are screened.

Preferred Ranking	Activity	Weighted Score	Current Participation Ranking
1	Basketball	1243	5
2	Bicycling for Pleasure	832	9
3	Watching TV	789	1
4	Computers (personal)	762	2
5	Camping (general)	726	18
6	Concerts (attend)	709	17
7	Football	701	15
8	Rock climbing	652	37
9	Fairs and Festivals	611	21
10	Dancing (social)	576	26
11	Jogging/Running	562	7
12	Photography	537	20
13	Musical Instrument (playing)	514	4
14	Reading for Pleasure	476	3
15	River Rafting	475	41
16	Hiking/Backpacking	461	27
17	Soccer	460	14
18	Fishing (freshwater)	444	29
19	Canoe/Kayak	430	47
20	Arts and Crafts	419	22

*Prepared by MIG, Inc., Eugene, Oregon*

